



Esprit de Corps

A Bulletin of the Washington Service Corps

Washington State
SERVICE CORPS
EMPLOYMENT SECURITY DEPARTMENT

Inside this Issue

What Does SERVES Mean? Page 2

Stepping Stones to Your Future Page 2

Core Training Requirements Page 3

Show Your Team Spirit Page 3

Supervisors Get Training Too Page 4

Networking Opportunities Page 4

Disaster Preparedness, the Corporation for National Service and the WA Service Corps Page 5

American Red Cross Page 6

Important Things to Know About SERVES Page 7

Winter Driving Tips Page 7

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Special SERVES Edition



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Each program year, the Washington Service Corps conducts an exciting learning event for all members.

Called the SERVES Institute, it is a conference that offers training workshops, networking with peers and supervisors, and civic-engagement projects.

With approximately 900 AmeriCorps and VISTA members attending from across Washington state, SERVES has something for everyone.

variety of areas. Members learn more about themselves, grow as leaders, and learn about other programs and volunteer opportunities. Networking with other professionals offers the chance to learn from other members' challenges and successes.

SERVES offers seminars that help members plan for their futures and assist in setting goals during their year of service, as well as for life after AmeriCorps. Session topics include learning to work in culturally diverse communities, becoming a great reading tutor, learning to be a lively group facilitator, being an active volunteer recruiter, and becoming a knowledgeable and proficient grant writer.

All AmeriCorps and VISTA members of The Washington Service Corps are exceptional individuals who deserve the best training possible.

Taking into consideration members' budgets, time constraints, livelihoods and priorities, the SERVES Institute is typically held in the central part of the state and The Washington Service Corps provides all travel, hotel and food for the duration of the workshops.

The SERVES Institute gives members the support and training needed to gain the best results during a term of service. Not only do members enhance their skills, and develop professionally and personally, they also meet lifelong friends.

The workshops are great opportunities to get professional training in a

What does SERVES mean?

Skills: to develop skills we need to serve our communities

Education: to educate ourselves so that our service is based on proven "best practices"

Resources: to identify, obtain, and use the abundance of resources available to us

Volunteers: to ensure that our volunteers, once recruited, are trained and retained in meaningful service experiences

Empowerment: to give "voice" to members and support self actualization

Synergy: to create an environment where the total effect of our service is greater than the sum of individual efforts



"Stepping Stones to Your Future"

This year's theme for SERVES is "Stepping Stones to Your Future".

This year of service is going to be an amazing time in your life. The people you meet, the training you receive, the connections you make, both on a personal level and a professional level.

Take advantage of every opportunity to learn, network and promote your service and your project site.

It's easy to be excited about the program and your enthusiasm will be contagious! You never can tell where your service may lead you.



Core training requirements for AmeriCorps and AmeriCorps*VISTA members

The Washington Service Corps requires its members to have training in several key categories:

- AmeriCorps Affiliation & Program Orientation
- Cultural Competency
- Service Project Planning
- Effective Communication
- Teambuilding
- Volunteer Recruitment, training and management
- Personal Disaster Preparedness

- First Aid/CPR and Disaster Shelter Operation
OR
- Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training

Only three of these topics (AmeriCorps Affiliation, First Aid/CPR and CERT Training) are not offered at SERVES.

Team-based programs may receive much of this training at their local sites. It's important for individually-placed members to be aware of these training requirements and make the most of meeting the requirement by attending workshops at SERVES.

For those that have received the core trainings prior to SERVES, check out other workshops such as:

- Building a Vision for Yourself and Your Project;
- Working with Students and Families in Poverty;
- Grant Writing;
- Bridging the Gap- Multigenerational Differences, or
- How Big is Your Ecological Footprint?



SHOW YOUR TEAM SPIRIT

During the opening session of SERVES, we will be conducting a "roll call" of the various programs, projects and sites. There are three distinct groups of members: team-based projects, VISTA members and individual placements. VISTA and Individual placement members will be announced as a group, rather than by individual sites. No matter which group you fall into, members are welcome to make and bring signs, banners, and/or posters designating your project site and/or team. Be prepared to represent and make some noise when your program is called!

VETERAN'S DAY PARADE OPPORTUNITY

Those signs can do double duty.....on Thursday, November 11, the Veteran's Day Parade in Yakima is going to be very close to the Convention Center. The WSC is completing an application so that members/teams that want to participate in the parade can march with their signs. Please let Julie Garitone know if you are interested in participating. Julie can be reached at jgaritone@esd.wa.gov.



Team-Based Project Supervisors Get Training Too

Do you wonder what your project supervisor is going to be doing while you're in workshops? Well, they get training too! Not only are they able to take the same workshops available to members, they have a special workshop just for them.

Project supervisors get together to hear the latest updates from the Corporation for National Service, the State Commission and the WA Service Corps. Discussions can cover a multitude of subjects, including training plans, performance measures, monitoring, and strategic plans for the upcoming program year.

Supervisors can give input on what they would like to see on the agenda for their workshop, being held Tuesday, November 9 from 9:00 a.m. -

12:00 p.m. The workshop will be held in the new downtown Holiday Inn, across the street from the Convention Center.

Washington Reading Corps supervisors will also attend an afternoon session from 1:30 – 5:00 p.m. in the same location.

Possible table topics:

- Life After AmeriCorps, what was successful for sites last year?
- What do supervisors want to see as a focus topic at the Spring Supervisor training
- Media coverage, how best to get public awareness



- Legislative visits, successful approaches
- Great stories, how to share the best ones, what to include and why.

If you have input to share, please e-mail your suggestions to Debbie Aoki at: daoki@esd.wa.gov or to Eric Kindvall at: ewkindvall@esd.wa.gov

Networking Opportunities

Did you look at a lot of different positions on the AmeriCorps website before applying? What made you choose the site you did?

One of the great things about attending SERVES is the opportunity to meet members from other sites and other locations in the state. To help foster the spirit of networking, we encourage you to sit at meals with members that you might not know and learn about the service they are providing.

If your team is one that has members spread out over a geographic area, SERVES may be one of the few times you are all together and therefore you WANT to sit with your teammates. That's fine, too—we have other opportunities for you to meet other members.

Obviously, while you are attending workshops, you will meet members from other programs. In addition, during the evenings of November 8th and 9th, we will have rooms set aside as networking rooms. November 8 in the networking room, there will be signs designating different geographic regions. We encourage members to meet other members from their general area. November 9 the room will be broken down by types of service. Come meet other members that are doing the same or similar kind of service you are—you may have resources or tools you can share!

Disaster Preparedness, the Corporation for National Service and the WA Service Corps (WSC)

Disasters strike throughout the United States each year, bringing massive property destruction and disrupting millions of lives. While Corporation programs have always supported disaster preparedness and response efforts, they have played a much broader and more extensive role in recent years. This experience has demonstrated that national service participants can fulfill a wide range of preparedness and response roles: management and coordination of volunteers and resources, training and development of coordinated response plans and providing direct service to affected communities.

To help meet these responsibilities and better position the Corporation to provide leadership to volunteer management and preparedness efforts, in June 2007, the Corporation's Board of Directors designated disaster preparedness and response as an agency strategic initiative. The intent is to build national, state and local response capacity to use volunteers and plan effectively to provide volunteer support when, where and how it is needed.

Corporation Targets for 2010:

- Program participants who are certified in disaster-related training;
- Program participants who are available for deployment in support of local, state, or other disasters;
- Community members who receive disaster preparedness information or training from Corporation program participants.

As part of that initiative, the WSC developed core competencies in their training plan for members that included: personal disaster preparedness, Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training and/or First Aid/CPR and

American Red Cross Shelter Operations training.

Our goal is to have the almost 900 members in the WSC programs be prepared for disasters and able to be a resource to their communities in times of disaster. Whether it's developing your own personal preparedness plan, helping community members develop their preparedness plans, or actively volunteering with your local Red Cross, everyone can benefit from preparedness training.

At SERVES, you will be able to attend personal disaster preparedness training, which runs consecutively throughout the program, in 90-minute sessions.

You will also have an opportunity to attend Red Cross shelter operations training, which is a half-day training, also running throughout the conference.



With these two workshops, you are more than halfway to meeting your requirement for the disaster preparedness training.

Pre-registration IS required for emergency shelter operations, so don't forget to submit your registration if you want to attend!

American Red Cross Shelter Operations & More

For many years now, the WSC Ready*Corps program has partnered with American Red Cross Chapters across the State. This has been a very successful partnership, that has grown in size over the last two program years. Last year, the American Red Cross was predominant at SERVES, training over 900 members in shelter operations. Due to the threat of flooding from the Howard Hansen Dam in King County, Seattle Red Cross staff gave part of the presentation at the opening SERVES on what it would mean if the Dam were to flood and how far reaching the effects could be.

Even though the imminent threat of that particular issue has passed, there still remains a need for individuals and organizations to be prepared to face whatever nature may throw at us! One way to do that is to take advantage of training and opportunities the Red Cross offers. Since its founding in 1881, the American Red Cross has been the nation's premier emergency response organization. As part of a worldwide movement that offers neutral humanitarian care to the victims of war, the American Red Cross distinguishes itself by also aiding victims of devastating natural disasters. Over the years, the organization has expanded its services, always with the aim of preventing and relieving suffering.

Today, in addition to domestic disaster relief, the American Red Cross offers compassionate services in five other areas: community services that help the needy; support and comfort for military members and their families; the collection, processing and distribution of lifesaving blood and blood products; educational programs that promote health and safety; and international relief and development programs.

The American Red Cross is where people mobilize to help their neighbors—across the street, across the country, and across the world—in emergencies. Each year, in communities large and small, victims of some 70,000 disasters turn to neighbors familiar and new—the more than half a million volunteers and 35,000 employees of the Red Cross. Through nearly 700 locally supported chapters, more than 15 million people gain the skills they need to prepare for and respond to emergencies in their homes, communities and world.

It is the WSC's hope that those of you that take Shelter Operations at SERVES as part of your required training will want to know more and want to be more involved. This is an excellent way to find out about just a small piece of what the Red Cross does and ways that you can be a resource to your local community. We encourage members to continue with the training the Red Cross offers through their local chapter, and to even sign up to be a volunteer in their community. From an apartment fire where residents are displaced, to earthquakes in Haiti, the Red Cross is there to support individuals and families that need assistance. For more information, contact your local Red Cross chapter. To find the closest chapter, please visit: <http://www.redcrosswashington.org/>.



Important Things to Know About SERVES

- SERVES is a mandatory training event for all members within the WSC programs.
- SERVES is being held November 8-11, 2010 at the Yakima Convention Center in Yakima, WA and attendees will be housed in several of the closest hotels.
- November 10th is payday, so if you do not have direct deposit, please make arrangements for the deposit of your check while you are away.
- November 11th is a federal holiday for Veteran's Day Observance.
- Members are paired two to a room, by gender, for lodging. Should you have issues with your lodging, please see Terri Jack, Conference Coordinator.
- Meals are served buffet style, with specific sections established for vegetarian and vegan food.
- The WSC provides meal choices with meat as well as vegetarian and vegan options. Due to the large size of our program, we cannot provide for all special dietary needs, such as gluten-free, or lactose intolerant diners. Special dietary needs are the responsibility of the individual.
- Many teams and/or programs are hosting meetings the evening of Monday, November 8, so be sure to check the agenda at: <http://www.esd.wa.gov/washingtonservicecorps/partnersandmembers/>. A draft workshop schedule can also be found at the same link.
- If you are interested in learning more about Peace Corps, representatives from Peace Corps will be on hand one evening to give information regarding the program and to answer questions.

Winter Driving Tips

SERVES is in November this year and November can mean variable weather conditions such as rain and snow in the mountain passes. To prepare yourself and your vehicle for winter driving, you can get tons of great information from the Department of Transportation (DOT) website, as well as see live views from the mountain pass cameras. DOT has a guide to winter driving, a winter driving video, information on emergency car kits, as well as information on chains and studded tires. Please visit them at: <http://www.wsdot.wa.gov/winter/>.



Upcoming Important Dates and Events

November 2, 2010 Election Day

November 8-11, 2010 SERVES Institute

November 11, 2010 Veteran's Day

November 25, 2010 Thanksgiving Holiday



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